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NCC RESEARCH REPORT No. 1

RACE DISCRIMINATION IN SPORT

A NEW ZEALAND CONTROVERSY

Richard Thompson

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National Council of Churches

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P R E F A C E

This work is No. 1 in a new series that the National Council of Churches in New Zealand will be publishing. The Council from its inception in 1941 has in various ways encouraged study and research, and intends to continue to do so, in fields relevant to its mission.

We are happy to be able to open this series with a report by Mr R. H. T. Thompson, whose **Race Relations in New Zealand** we published in 1963.

His **Race and Sport** was published in 1964 by the Oxford University Press. A commentator on the B.B.C.'s weekly sporting round-up described **Race and Sport** as "the most important book on sport for decades."

It is clear that the question of race relations will not become less pressing in the future. The National Council of Churches commends this work to all men and women of goodwill, as a basis for their consideration.

— W. S. DAWSON, President,

National Council of Churches in New Zealand.

MARCH, 1969

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RACE DISCRIMINATION IN SPORT

A New Zealand Controversy

Criticism of race discrimination in New Zealand's reciprocal sports tours with South Africa has been continuous for the last decade. The end of the controversy is not in sight and the proposed All Black rugby tour of South Africa in 1970 can be expected to give the dispute a new lease of life. For a long while, the problem was met more acutely in New Zealand than in other countries competing with South Africa because of Maori prominence in rugby. The post-war influx of Commonwealth immigrants into Britain has meant that Britain can now no longer avoid an issue familiar in New Zealand for almost half a century. A growing interest in race discrimination in sport along the racial frontiers of the world encourages the belief that there is no immediate prospect of the issue simply fading from sight. In New Zealand we must either resolve the matter or continue to live with it.

The controversy has important implications for the churches; it raises questions about the mutual responsibilities and relationships of the churches in South Africa and New Zealand; it challenges the sincerity of both New Zealand's expressed support for the cause of racial justice abroad and its policy of racial integration at home; it raises questions about the action of the churches in relation to the state as social critics and agents of reform.

The purpose of this report is to outline very briefly:

- (i) The source of the controversy surrounding New Zealand's reciprocal sports tours with South Africa,
- (ii) The record of the churches in the controversy,
- (iii) The issues raised by the proposed 1970 All Black tour of South Africa, and
- (iv) The present responsibility of the churches.

1. The Source of the Controversy

The policy of the South African Government in race relations is one of segregation, that of the New Zealand Government is integration. Reciprocal sports tours between the two countries bring together two incompatible policies. This section will describe briefly South African racial policy in sport and the New Zealand response to it.

(i) **South African Policy:** As far back as June, 1956, the South African Minister of the Interior, Dr T. E. Dinges, announced the rules by which sport within South Africa should be governed to bring it into accord with the policy of separate development. There would be no inter-racial

competition and no mixing of races in teams; sportsmen from abroad would observe the traditions. No New Zealand sports body which has toured South Africa since Dr Donges' announcement has been free either to select non-white New Zealanders for inclusion in the side, or to play non-white South Africans in their country.

This policy was reiterated and elaborated by Dr Donges' successor, Senator J. de Klerk, in a series of statements in 1962 and 1963. The ban on mixed race teams was extended to include South Africans competing abroad. Senator de Klerk's 1963 reiteration of government policy in the form of a 9-point summary remained authoritative until it was modified by the South African Prime Minister, Mr B. J. Vorster, in April 1967 in an attempt to protect the interests of white sportsmen and spectators. This statement did nothing to relax the requirements of apartheid within the Republic, but it did recognize the Olympic Games as a unique event and for this occasion South Africa could be represented by "one" (not "integrated") team that would travel together, be accommodated together, march together, wear the same uniform, but would not be selected from mixed trials either inside South Africa or outside. Mr Vorster also offered to accommodate certain other international competitions in South Africa that had less prestige than the Olympics, namely, the Canada Cup and Davis Cup tournaments. In the event of coloured sportsmen from abroad being included, they could be received hospitably because this would not involve a personal relationship but only an inter-state relationship. South Africa's own non-white sportsmen would not be eligible to participate. The implications of Mr Vorster's statement were not clear, but it was hopefully interpreted as meaning that the cricketer, D'Oliveira, and an occasional Maori rugby player would be acceptable as part of an otherwise white touring side.

Apartheid in sport encountered opposition from some non-white sports bodies and liberals of all races who upheld the Olympic principle of non-racial sport. In 1958 the South African Sports Association was set up to co-ordinate the efforts of those working towards this goal; Mr Alan Paton, national president of the S.A. Liberal Party, was a vice-president of the new organisation. Although there was no law against inter-racial sport, the South African Government responded with police harrassment and suppression. With the disbanding of the S.A. Liberal Party in 1968, protesting organizations have been reduced to SAN-ROC, S.A. Non-Racial Open Committee for Olympic Sports, the successor to the S.A. Sports Association, and the African National Congress, both of which now have headquarters

outside the Republic. Although active campaigning against government policy in sport with South Africa has been suppressed, the Olympic ideal in many ways shows a remarkable resilience among non-white sportsmen.

(ii) **The New Zealand Response:** New Zealand's sporting associations with South Africa go back half a century. In recent years reciprocal tours between the two countries have been increasing. Not only do we exchange the visits of rugby and cricket teams but the range of sport has widened to include tennis, bowls, basketball, golf, badminton, squash and athletics. This increase is due in part to the speed of modern air travel which makes short tours practicable, but it is also due in part to South Africa's refusal to play any but white countries prepared to accept her racial restrictions. Teams from India, Pakistan and the West Indies are not acceptable cricketing opponents and the honorary white status of Japanese businessmen does not extend to a contact sport such as rugby.

Until the New Zealand Rugby Union found itself in a position where it was forced to decline an invitation to tour South Africa in 1967 because Maori players would be excluded, New Zealand sportsmen had always conformed to the demands of South African policy. They had agreed to the exclusion of non-white New Zealanders from representative teams visiting South Africa; they had agreed to ignore the existence of non-white South African sportsmen and to play in grounds where non-white South African spectators were segregated or from which they were excluded altogether; they had agreed to accept in the Dominion teams claiming to represent South Africa which had been selected according to a rigid colour bar. In these changes, non-white players were excluded from the South African sides at home and away and from the New Zealand sides away. Only when New Zealand played at home were non-white New Zealanders allowed to participate. After the controversy preceding the 1960 All Black tour of South Africa, New Zealand opinion appeared to reach the point where it was accepted that Maoris should not be excluded from New Zealand representative teams on racial grounds.

It is useful to contrast the response of New Zealand to South African demands for racial restrictions with that of Brazil. In 1959 a match was arranged between a Brazilian soccer team in transit for Mozambique and a white team in Cape Town. Those of the Brazilian players who were obviously non-white were to be dropped in deference to South African racial policy. When President Kubitschek's attention was drawn to the division of the Brazilian team along racial lines, the President directed that the match

should be cancelled and a bill was brought before the Chamber of Deputies stating that: "Anyone who, in sports competitions abroad, submits himself or makes another submit himself to rules resulting from race or colour prejudice, is liable to penal sanction."

Appeals from South African organizations devoted to the ideal of non-racial sport and protesting against race discrimination in tour arrangements have been received regularly by New Zealand sports bodies. The appeals have evoked from sports administrators some hostility but little sympathy. At conference after conference of the international governing bodies of the various sporting codes, exclusively white South African sports bodies have been able to rely on the support of their New Zealand counterparts. These complain that those who criticize the racial restrictions to the tour arrangements between the two countries are bringing politics into sport. It is true that the tour conditions have political implications. If the Citizens' Association for Racial Equality is successful in having either the 1970 tour cancelled or the racial restrictions removed, it will disconcert the South African Government and gratify its critics. If the Rugby Union is successful in touring the Republic and conforming with the race restrictions demanded by apartheid, it will gratify the South African Government and disconcert its critics. Neither CARE nor the N.Z. Rugby Union offers a course of action free of politics, but they do offer a choice of politics.

Race discrimination in New Zealand sports tours with South Africa has only been possible because of the support of the New Zealand Government. Our Government has combined verbal denunciations of apartheid with a drive for increased trade with the Republic. It has combined verbal professions of neutrality in issues involving sports tours of South Africa with active and effective assistance to New Zealand sports bodies over against their critics. It has honoured those who organize sports tours with the Republic and described those who protest against the race discrimination involved as "fleas" and as people who have harmed New Zealand by their "agitation."

2. The Record of the Churches

While there have been churchmen such as the Anglican Bishop of Auckland, the Rt Rev. E. A. Gowing, who have consistently opposed the racial restrictions in the South African tours, the interest of the churches has largely been confined to the period prior to the 1960 All Black rugby tour of South Africa and to the period prior to the 1965 Springbok rugby tour of New Zealand when a conference of sports bodies and churches was convened.

(i) The Protest Prior to the 1960 Tour of South Africa:

The churches played no significant part in the protest over the exclusion of Maoris from the 1948 rugby tour of South Africa but they initiated the controversy over Maori exclusion from the rugby side to tour South Africa in 1960. Presbyteries up and down the country, synods and church conferences expressed their concern. In May 1959, the National Council of Churches' Life and Work Conference at Ardmore, made up of 100 church leaders officially appointed by member churches, passed unanimously the following resolution:

"Having regard to the fact that the Treaty of Waitangi guarantees to the Maori people 'all rights and privileges of British subjects' and that in the words of Captain Hobson, 'we are now one people,' having regard also to the fact that in two world wars Maoris have fought beside their Pakeha brothers in defence of our country; this Conference deplores the proposal to select a Rugby team that is to represent New Zealand solely from Pakeha players. Further, this Conference is of the opinion that if a Rugby team cannot be selected on a truly representative basis, none should be sent."

In June 1959, eight church leaders, heads of their respective communities in the Dominion, issued a statement on the possible exclusion of Maori players from the tour.* After stating: "We realise, of course, that the governing body of the New Zealand Rugby Union has a difficult decision to make and that the difficulty largely arises from a desire to save Maori players from humiliation in a land where racial prejudice is deeply rooted," they went on to say:

"We believe that we have a very large body of opinion behind us when we assert —

That in selecting a team that is to represent New Zealand, no player should be excluded on grounds of race.

That, if Maori players are selected to go to South Africa, the responsibility should be placed firmly upon the South African Rugby Union to ensure that Maori players will be treated in all respects like other members of the team.

That, if the South African Rugby Union is unable to accept this condition and to give an assurance that it is able to carry it out, no team should be sent."

The statement was notable for the appearance amongst the signatories of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Wellington, the Most Rev. P. T. B. McKeefry, associating his

* The statement was signed by the Most Rev. P. T. B. McKeefry, Roman Catholic Archbishop and Metropolitan; the Rev. J. D. Salmond, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church; the Rev. M. H. Taylor, Chairman of the Congregational Union; the Rev. Gordon R. H. Peterson, President of the Methodist Conference; Mr L. R. Pugh, President of the Associated Churches of Christ; Mr H. J. Hayward, President of the Baptist Union; the Rev. Elias Economou, Rector of the Greek Orthodox Church; Mr W. S. Metcalf, Clerk of the Society of Friends.

church with the protest for the first time, and for the absence of the Anglican Primate, the Most Rev. R. H. Owen. Archbishop Owen consulted the members of the Anglican Provincial Public and Social Affairs Committee who with one exception advised him not to sign. Six Anglican Bishops promptly made public their disagreement with Archbishop Owen.

In July 1959, the Maori section of the N.C.C. issued a statement regarding the exclusion of Maoris and urging that the tour be abandoned. The statement read in part:

"We are persuaded that, in a world of deteriorating race relationships, New Zealand, with her world-wide reputation for good race relationships, has an important role to fill and that the decision of the Rugby Union, in whatever good faith it has been made, does grievous harm to this mission that New Zealand is specially called on to exercise.

While the action taken is a compromise to meet a difficult situation, it does grievous harm to race relations in New Zealand because Maoris have been excluded on the grounds of race.

Further, it has immediately spoiled our reputation in the eyes of the peoples of South-East Asia with whom we are so intimately and increasingly involved as a predominantly European integer in an Asian sphere . . .

The decision also does dis-service to the large majority group of sportsmen in South Africa who are struggling to combat the apartheid policy in sport and comes as a very great disappointment to them."

In June 1959, the Citizens' All Black Tour Association took over the organization of the protest, but churches continued to express their concern, ministers were prominent in branches and meetings of C.A.B.T.A., and church representatives did much to strengthen the deputation to the Prime Minister and the Acting Leader of the Opposition in February 1960. The national executive of the National Council of Churches made no statements on the issue because the member churches and church leaders did so. Nevertheless, the N.C.C. played a key role through its general secretary, the Rev. A. Brash, and its journal *Church and Community* which published a series of editorials and articles designed to clarify the issues involved. In the middle of 1959 the N.C.C. raised privately with the Prime Minister, Mr W. Nash, the possibility of his calling a meeting of representatives of the Rugby Union and C.A.B.T.A. so that they could meet representatives of the N.C.C. and the Roman Catholic Church, the Leader of the Opposition and whoever else Mr Nash might choose to invite. After many delays the Prime Minister suddenly requested a meeting of N.C.C. and Rugby Union representatives in March 1960. The N.C.C. representatives made two unqualified requests: That the Prime Minister make a clear statement on the racial

policy of New Zealand and that the impending tour should be cancelled. The Prime Minister expressed his approval of the N.Z. Rugby Union in the strongest terms and declined to intervene, but he did agree to make a statement about New Zealand policy. At the request of the Prime Minister, the N.C.C. made no statement about the meeting.

(ii) **The 1964 Conference of Sports Bodies and Churches:** The national controversy preceding the 1960 Rugby tour was restricted almost entirely to the exclusion of Maori players and it was the policy of C.A.B.T.A. not to concern itself with wider issues such as those of South African policy. The statements of the member churches of the N.C.C. showed a broader perspective; they reflected a concern for the effect of the issue on New Zealand's relationship with Asia and for South Africa's racial policies. This broader perspective continued to be reflected in statements by the N.C.C. Executive and by articles in *Church and Community*, a journal which has become a basic source of documentation on the issue in the period 1958-1963.

Early in 1964 an open letter was addressed to the leaders of the member churches of the N.C.C. and the Metropolitan of the Roman Catholic Church, the 11 signatories being churchmen with appropriately diverse affiliation.*

The letter drew attention to the number of sports tours with South Africa in prospect and to the racial restrictions inherent in their organization.

"The visit of racially exclusive South African sports teams to this country is a source of concern in that; (1) racial exclusiveness is incompatible with good sportsmanship, (2) test matches are played and the granting of full representative and test status to a white team implies that the rights of non-white South African sportsmen can be ignored, (3) South African teams are selected in accordance with the principle of apartheid for which New Zealand has expressed its abhorrence at the United Nations, (4) Alan Paton and ex-chief Albert Luthuli have appealed for an end to all co-operation in sports events which accept apartheid and the New Zealand Government has expressed in the United Nations the Dominion's wholehearted support for these men.

The visit of New Zealand sportsmen to South Africa raises additional problems to those mentioned so far. New Zealand teams in South Africa — (1) Play only against white South Africans and ignore the existence of non-white sportsmen and their organizations. (2) Play in grounds in which non-white spectators are segregated or from which they are excluded altogether, (3) May not be of mixed race."

* The Rev. S. G. Andrews and the Rev. J. J. Lewis (Methodist); the Rev. Alan A. Brash, the Rev. D. F. Glenny and the Rev. Walter M. Hendrie (Presbyterian); the Rev. John Curnow and the Rev. F. Wall, S.M. (Roman Catholic); the Rev. J. T. Crozier (Baptist); the Rev. I. W. Ogier (Church of Christ), the Very Rev. Allan Pyatt and Mr Richard Thompson (Anglican).

The open letter asked that the problem posed by these race restrictions be considered and appropriate action be taken. The letter indicated some of the possibilities open to the churches:

"For example . . . a joint commission could be set up to investigate the issue and the obligations of churchmen with regard to it; the leaders of Government and Opposition could be asked to consider the conditions which should govern sports tours with South Africa if the Dominion's policies in the sphere of race relations are not to be compromised; and attention could be drawn to the rights of non-white South African and New Zealand sportsmen, church members being asked to withhold support from tours which ignore those rights."

The Rt Rev. H. W. Baines, Anglican Bishop of Wellington, was asked by the N.C.C. to convene a meeting for the N.C.C. and the Roman Catholic Church. On 15th July 1964, church representatives met privately and agreed that no player should be excluded on grounds of race from a team to represent New Zealand, that the committee should meet again to consider its attitude to visiting colour-bar sides and that it should meet with representatives of sports bodies. On 21st August the Joint Churches Committee agreed to convene a conference of representatives of the churches and major sports bodies to consider the issues of race and sport in the light of the following conditions:

- "(a) That it is in accordance with Christian and sporting principles that national teams should be selected on merit alone.
- (b) That where teams are selected on any other basis the basis of representation should be clearly described, for example the Springbok as representing white South Africa.
- (c) That, while we repudiate racial discrimination in sport, the Springbok team invited to play in New Zealand in 1965 should be received in friendship.
- (d) That thereafter the New Zealand sporting bodies should not invite teams purporting to be nationally representative in whose selection racial discrimination has been practised."

On 14th December the Conference of Sports Bodies and Churches agreed to ask their organizations to consider the following propositions and to report back at a further meeting in April 1965.

- "(a) That it is in accordance with Christian and sporting principles that national teams should be selected without regard to race.
- (b) That there is value in keeping an open door in sporting relationships with countries where racial prejudice obtains. Such a situation provides an opportunity for improving human relationships.
- (c) That churches and sports bodies should work for the embodiment of Christian principles in the field of international sport."

At two subsequent meetings the organizations affirmed the propositions but could reach no agreement about their

implementation. The Conference agreed to keep communication open, and churches were invited to share with sports bodies their ideas about how the propositions could be put into effect. In accordance with this agreement the Anglican Provincial Public and Social Affairs Committee spelt out what it believed the three propositions meant:

- "1. That Maoris and members of all racial groups in New Zealand will in future be eligible for any representative New Zealand sports team.
2. That there can be no objection to racially selected teams so long as they do not claim to be nationally representative.
3. That nevertheless the 1965 Springbok Rugby team which has already accepted an invitation to visit New Zealand should be received with friendship."

The three propositions represented only the extent of the agreement between the sports bodies and churches and reflected current newspaper editorial opinion. An open letter to the chairman of the Churches' Joint Committee at the time described the propositions as a prescription for inaction; the first of these stated what the Rugby Union had already been forced to concede, the second begged the vital issues and the third was devoid of implications. The Executive of the N.C.C. did not agree that these propositions represented an acceptable basis for policy. The profound disagreement which existed between sports bodies and many churchmen was not expressed in the findings of the conference.

The effect of the conference was to give the impression that the propositions represented more than the extent of the common ground. The churches appeared to have accepted the moral basis for continued tours with white South Africa and to have given their unconditional acceptance to the 1965 Springbok touring side. The spokesman for the Roman Catholic diocese of Christchurch described the propositions as a "moral consensus" that "would seem to serve adequately the principles of both justice and Christian charity in a controversial situation." The sports bodies made no concessions. "The action of the churches' representatives," said the *New Zealand Listener's* sports commentator, "could reduce the number of demonstrations against visiting sportsmen from South Africa."

In February 1965, with a Springbok rugby visit only months away, the Maori section of the National Council of Churches issued the following statement:

"The visit of the South African rugby team to New Zealand selected on a racial exclusion basis presents to us in New Zealand a challenge to our Christian consciences.

Because of our essential opposition to the whole doctrine of apartheid we ask our people to maintain their Christian convictions and witness at every opportunity:

A conscientious study of the issues underlying the policy of apartheid,

A clear understanding of the Christian principles at stake.

A strong determination to oppose any move to allow issues of race or colour to dictate policy of the selection of any touring teams leaving this Dominion,

Expressing our opposition to apartheid in every possible way according to our convictions,

Some may choose to absent themselves from all matches of the forthcoming tour of the Springbok team,

Others may express their opposition in different ways,

Any such protest is not because of opposition to the players personally but because of sincerely held principles."

Much has happened since the conference on race and sport called by the N.C.C. After Dr Verwoerd's rebuff, the Rugby Union had no option but to decline to tour in 1967 and was warmly congratulated on this decision by church bodies. Since the conference, however, the churches have said nothing of significance on this issue.

(iii) **The Ambiguous Role of the Churches:** The role of the churches in the protest against race discrimination in sport has been an important one, but it has also been an ambiguous one. On the one hand, churchmen initiated the controversy over the 1960 All Black tour and did much to ensure that the protest was maintained. Church support helped to legitimize the protest movement.

On the other hand, the appearance of unanimity amongst churches in opposing the exclusion of Maori players from New Zealand teams was to some extent an illusion encouraged by the silence of those who were indifferent or in favour of South African tours under any conditions. This division of opinion has been apparent in church debates, in reported statements of influential churchmen, but most of all in the loyal support given to sports bodies by the church-linked secondary schools, and sports clubs. Sports clubs and secondary schools were in a position to have had the exclusion of Maori players discussed by the provincial rugby bodies. This would have forced the Rugby Union to defend its position. But no church school and only one Marist club took action which ensured that the exclusion of Maori players was at least discussed by the provincial body. When church secondary schools in Christchurch and Marist rugby clubs were approached in 1964, they showed no inclination to raise with the Rugby Union the exclusion of non-white South Africans from the 1965 Springbok tour of New Zealand. Similarly, a Marist cricket club declined to protest against the exclusion of non-white South Africans from the 1964 cricket tour of New Zealand, even when the excluded players were Roman Catholic as

was Basil D'Oliveira. Schools and clubs operating under the auspices of the various churches are often autonomous and it is not clear how far they are bound by the principles of the churches. Nevertheless, staff, pupils and those who control policy are drawn from the heart of the denomination concerned.

The position of a church on the issue of race and sport has been more equivocal where that church has been linked with secondary schools and sports clubs or where its membership was drawn from a wide social range. Caught between conflicting pressures, official statements such as the 1959 statement by church leaders are high in generality, low in implications, and devoid of commitment. Such statements do something to placate more radical opinion and express the church's concern for the whole issue of race equality. But the fact that no one is actually expected to do anything gives reassurance to more conservative opinion.

3. The 1970 All Black Tour of South Africa

The proposed All Black rugby tour raises a variety of questions that merit consideration.

(i) **The Rhodesia and Southwest Africa Issues:** Rhodesia is a member of the South African Rugby Federation and an invitation to tour South Africa is an invitation to tour Rhodesia as well. The British Isles rugby authorities accepted the customary match in Salisbury despite a request from the British Government not to do so. Asked last year about the attitude of the N.Z. Rugby Union to the inclusion of Rhodesia in the itinerary, the chairman, Mr T. C. Morrison, merely indicated that the itinerary was not yet available. Asked about the Government's attitude to the inclusion of Rhodesia in the itinerary, the Prime Minister, Mr Holyoake, declined to answer.

It has recently been announced that the All Blacks will be visiting Rhodesia and playing a match in Salisbury.

There is evidence of considerable sympathy among sports administrators for Mr Smith's cause, just as there is among members of the cabinet. In 1965 the President of the N.Z. Rugby Union stayed with Mr Lardner-Burke, President of the Rhodesian Rugby Union and Minister of Law and Order in the Smith government, and returned to New Zealand a passionate defender of the Smith regime. During the last twelve months, New Zealand tennis players, ploughing competitors and a bowls team have toured Rhodesia. The Manager of the New Zealand bowls team was photographed presenting Mr Smith with a tour badge.

The director of the Institute of International Affairs recently pointed out that the match the All Blacks are

scheduled to play at Windhoek also has political implications. In 1966 New Zealand voted in the General Assembly of the United Nations for a resolution by which the Assembly ended South Africa's mandate over South-west Africa. The visit to this territory by a team representing New Zealand in its national game as guests of a South African organisation implies a measure of recognition for South African occupation and administration of South-west Africa in defiance of the United Nations' decision which New Zealand supported.

(ii) **The Exclusion of Non-White South Africans:** The South African Rugby Board which issued the invitation has always operated a rigid colour bar and did so long before the present Government of South Africa came to power. It is only one of four bodies organizing rugby in South Africa on a national scale and represents the white minority only. The itinerary includes a series of test matches recognizing the white Springboks as a fully representative, national side. This claim has substance only if it is also acknowledged that the rights and aspirations of non-white South Africans are of no account. The New Zealand touring side will play whites only in an African country and it will play in grounds in which non-whites are segregated in the section known as "the zoo" or from which they are excluded altogether.

(iii) **The Acceptability of Maoris in South Africa:** The governing political party in South Africa is deeply divided on the acceptability of Maori players. The initial invitation to the New Zealand Rugby Union was carefully worded so as not to commit the South African Government on the matter. Asked in the course of a public meeting about the inclusion of Maoris, Mr Vorster replied: "Wait until 1970 and then ask your question." A few days later Mr Vorster found it necessary to state that Maori players in the 1970 All Blacks will be given a warm and traditional welcome; but Mr Vorster has retained his power of veto over players selected for the 1970 team and the question of eligibility remains uncertain.

There is also uncertainty about the position of Maoris who may wish to tour South Africa with parties of team supporters. South African tourist advertising does not mention that facilities are available to whites only. Whether or not Maori supporters are acceptable in the Republic is likely to depend on the ease with which the applicants for visas can be expected to "pass" as white and upon government decisions yet to be made. African officials from neighbouring countries, an American negro university professor, the Maori bass Inia Te Wiata in 1963 and the non-playing Maori

rugby representatives Mr Ralph Love and Mr Pat Walsh in 1964 have all been received with friendliness in South Africa. The visiting Maoris were classified white but how far this creates a precedent for the acceptance of Maori players and tourists is uncertain. What is certain is that any Maori player selected will be classified as white and that the 1970 All Blacks will be again all-white.

Regarding the proposed tour, the South African Government distinguishes between white and non-white New Zealanders in the case of both players and tourists. New Zealand waits to see whether Maoris or other non-white New Zealanders will be acceptable and allowed to "pass" as white. It would be improper to discriminate among New Zealanders in this way at home and it is no less improper to do so when they go abroad. The fact that it is a foreign government which does the discriminating in the interests of its policy of racial segregation leaves New Zealand's own policy of integration seriously compromised. If Maoris are allowed to "pass" as white while non-white South Africans are excluded from participating in the tour, Maoris will be open to the charge of being more concerned with social climbing than racial justice.

4. The Present Responsibility of the Churches

Although the issue of race discrimination in sports tours has been before the country continuously for the last ten years, the churches have yet to provide a full statement of their position on the matter. Statements have been made about one or more aspects of the situation, but none have attempted to state the position of the churches with regard to the situation as a whole. The 1959 statement by church leaders was concerned with the exclusion of Maoris; the 1964-65 Conference set out the extent of the agreement between churches and sports bodies but no statement, for example, has ever considered the obligations of New Zealand churchmen to non-white South African churchmen, fellow members in the Body of Christ.

This failure is not merely an oversight. When churches begin to clarify their policy, they are going to raise issues that many influential people in sporting, government and church circles do not wish to see raised. Had the N.C.C. Executive set out to state what it believed was an adequate expression of the churches' position following the 1965 Conference of sports bodies and churches, the N.C.C. would certainly have been criticised for radical tendencies, unrepresentative of opinion amongst churchmen, and calculated to sabotage the goodwill it had itself sought to create.

At present the controversy over racial discrimination in sport goes on, with the churches missing from the debate.

It may be that some churches are unable to say anything of significance without revealing the depth of the division in their membership. If this is the case, the need to clarify their own position becomes an urgent educative task, to be carried out even more for the sake of the churches than for the community. This is not a task that can fairly be left to individual ministers. Most of them are not only too busy but also too vulnerable to the pressures which a section of the congregation can bring to bear upon them and they are acutely aware of the fact. It is difficult and sometimes impossible for a minister to raise the moral issues involved in our sports tours with South Africa and Rhodesia without placing his own position in jeopardy.

This failure is not exclusive to the churches; it reflects the failure of leadership in both the Government and the sports bodies which protect the tours with the Republic by silence where possible and deceit and evasion where necessary. If the Government's denunciations of apartheid in the national forums really mean anything and if the policy of integration at home is to be taken seriously, then the issue of race discrimination in sports tours with the Republic imposes obligations on the Government which it has been careful not to define lest it be expected to honour them.

Church statements on the tours have yet to take apartheid seriously. If apartheid is a blasphemy against the Holy Spirit as the working party for the British Council of Churches unanimously concluded, how far is it possible to go along with the demands of such a policy? What must be said of white South African and New Zealand sportsmen sharing the hospitality, prestige and exhilaration of sports tours while ignoring the rights and aspirations of non-white South Africans, some of whom are fellow sportsmen and fellow members of a church in which racial discrimination is theoretically unthinkable? If the continuance of apartheid makes violence and race war inevitable, as the British Council of Churches' working party concluded, is it either kind or responsible to go along with white South African expectations and prejudices, helping to prolong a policy doomed to failure? Is honorary white status for Maoris in South Africa really acceptable? Is it acceptable that Maoris should be received in a relationship which is less than personal, in what Mr Vorster calls an inter-state relationship devoid of implications for other human relationships?

Church statements on the tours have yet to take society seriously. Men like Martin Luther King and Alan Paton learned by bitter experience that privileged groups rarely give up their privileges voluntarily; indeed they would usu-

ally consider it morally wrong to do so. The claim that "the more the South Africans were pressed by pressure groups, the less likely they were to accept the New Zealand point of view" simply flies in the face of the evidence. Social injustice is not righted by the application of a little moral and rational persuasion. Solutions to social conflict rarely fall into our laps if we "play our cards sensibly." The result of such an approach in the Conference of Sports Bodies and Churches is embarrassingly apparent. Reconciliation is not a task which permits the claims of justice to be ignored.

Church statements on the tours have yet to take themselves seriously. When the churches are really in earnest they will add to their statements an element of commitment, an indication of what the authors of the statements would themselves feel obliged to do should their appeals be ignored. During the race riots at Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957, the "crisis principle" was formulated—the moral right of the church to adopt a plan with elements of coercion in it. The ministers of Little Rock could not agree on appropriate courses of action under this principle, but in New Zealand, no thought has been given to the principle itself. It would not be difficult to envisage courses of action which would secure for the churches the immediate attention of political party leaders and sports administrators alike, but the same courses of action would test the strength of religious, political, commercial and rugby loyalties in the churches and in the associated schools, sports clubs and social clubs.

It is not a question of whether the churches have anything relevant to say about the issue of race discrimination in New Zealand's reciprocal sports tours with South Africa, but whether the churches are free to say it. Any move to direct their attention towards this issue effectively will stimulate strong counter-moves to see that if something must be done, it will have the least possible effect upon the situation.

The issue of race discrimination in our sports tours with South Africa raises serious questions about race relations at home and abroad. But it does more than this; it raises serious questions about the nature of the church as a social organization, about ecclesiastical bureaucracy, about church-linked schools and sports clubs. It raises in acute form the question of what new structures must be created inside the churches or possibly outside, so that the Christian witness on social issues can be effectively exercised.

